

Tips for Faculty and Staff working with Deaf Students

1. American Sign Language (ASL) is **not** equivalent to English; it is a visual-spatial language and has its own syntax and grammatical structure.
2. When working with an Interpreter or Captionist, speak directly to the Deaf student, using “I” and “you” and avoid third-party phrases such as, “Ask her” or “Tell him”.
3. There is a slight processing “lag time” between spoken word and sign language. The student may need more time to receive information, ask questions, and/or offer comments.
4. Deaf students will usually require seating at the front of the classroom to allow a clear view of the instructor, the Interpreter and the board.
5. All media (movies, video, YouTube clips) **MUST** be captioned or subtitled, as per Federal Law. It’s best to check that the captions work in your classroom before showing media. If you have any concerns about captioning, please call Tom Peters at 310-434-8706.
6. If a class session is more than an hour and a half, two Interpreters or Captionists will usually be scheduled and work on a rotating basis.
7. Bound by a Professional Code of Ethics, Interpreters and Captionists are hired by the College to interpret or caption EVERYTHING that is said in class; they are not permitted to engage in conversations, add personal opinions, or serve as classroom aides. Please do not ask Interpreters or Captionists to censor any information.
8. To give Deaf students equal opportunity to participate in class, ask that students raise their hands for questions or comments. This will ensure the Deaf student has had time to receive all of the information discussed.